

Licensed Child Care Center Advisory Board Meeting

April 9, 2009

Minutes – Submitted by Debby Rowan

Present: Melanie Brizzi, Tom Rayl, Lisa Clifford, Renee Kinder, Lisa Kipker, Carol Johnson, Karen Bale, Marie Pace, Heidi Dowell, Terri Kosik, Traci Mehey, Carrie Bale, Marlo Allen, Hillary Gibson, Mary Jane Scamahorn, Mike Garatoni, Patty Fisher, Nicole Scott, Pam Buschkill, Noel Hanson, Debby Rowan

General Business:

- Motion made by Terri Kosik and seconded by Mike Garatoni to approve the January 8 minutes. Motion carried.
- Heidi Dowell discussed that, according to the bylaws approved January 8, 2009, Advisory Board members who do not attend or send a proxy for two meetings will be removed from the board and replaced. However, some members may not be aware of this attendance requirement. Heidi will e-mail all members to make them aware of this. If directors or owners are interested in participating as a member of this board, they should be referred to Melanie Brizzi for consideration.

FSSA Update:

- Lisa Clifford stated that for opening or renovating centers, the state consultants are handling more of these approvals, as opposed to the Fire Marshall.
- Lisa Clifford clarified that centers working on Paths to Quality can earn “extra credit” but are not required to utilize the state’s health consultant program.
- Melanie stated that 1,142 providers are enrolled in Paths to Quality.
- The carefinder website will be updated to indicate that the bylaws were adopted on 1/8/09.

Report to Committee on Child Care:

- Mike Garatoni has been leading workgroup meetings to prepare for the next opportunity for the Advisory Board to present to the state’s Committee on Child Care. The group has discussed their concern that the State of Indiana currently regulates child care based on the provider type, rather than on the needs of children. The market economy drives parents to choose child care based on what they want, need and can afford (likely without consideration or possibly even without awareness of the regulatory differences among provider types). The result is a market that favors unlicensed, unregulated child care and puts increasing numbers of children at risk in unregulated or loosely regulated child care. Mike stated that the number of licensed centers is decreasing, while the number of unlicensed ministries, child care homes, and child care in public schools is increasing.
- Carol Johnson stated that she is involved in other child care groups and would like to invite participants from other groups to join this Advisory Board workgroup.

- It was decided that these meetings will be open to any participants (not just members of the Advisory Board). These meetings will now be listed on the carefinder website and a meeting announcement will be created that the state can then forward to everyone who has an e-mail listed with the state. (Lisa Clifford stated that e-mail contacts for all centers should be updated with her because many e-mail messages are returned as undeliverable. The following attendees indicated their e-mail on the sign-in sheet: Carrie Bale of Huffer Memorial cbale@huffermcc.org; and Hillary Gibson of Kids Place hilliary_gibson@newhopeservices.org)
- The next workgroup meeting is scheduled for 1 to 3 pm on June 4, 2009. Lisa Clifford will arrange for a room at Government Center and a call-in telephone line.
- Heidi Dowell discussed the need to decide on 3 – 5 regulations that the Advisory Board determines are most critical to the health and safety of children in all forms of care. Given the unlikely scenario of creating one set of rules across all provider types, the group should focus on creating standards for at least a few of the factors most important to providing safe care.
- Melanie Brizzi agreed to contact members from all three of the state's advisory groups (homes, ministries and centers) to propose a meeting to create consensus on this issue of the most critical aspects of quality care, such as teacher training and education, supervision requirements and staff-to-child ratios. Melanie will contact the other two advisory board groups and set up a meeting time. Agreed that a meeting on the same day as the next Center Advisory Board meeting, June 11, 2009, would be most convenient.
- Nicole Scott moved to hold this meeting, Terri Kosik seconded. Motion carried, with Tom Rayl abstaining.

Regulations Discussions

- Heidi Dowell expressed concern that Limited Criminal History checks on all new staff members check only Indiana, only with the specific name on the form (not maiden name or by social security number).
- Melanie Brizzi responded that a national FBI check is run on applicants when licensing is renewed, but not on all child care employees. The cost would be an issue with FBI checks on all staff, and a lack of connectivity among various state databases prohibits a broader search using the state police database.
- Heidi Dowell stated that licensed centers pay for the Limited Criminal History checks, while it is her understanding that other entities such as public schools, homes and unlicensed registered ministries are able to run these checks without any cost.
- Melanie Brizzi agreed to research who is required to pay for these and who is not. She will report this at the next meeting.
- Carol Johnson discussed the requirement to have parents sign a field trip permission form every time children leave the premises. She was told this includes taking children on a walk around the block, because they leave the center's property. In the past, a "blanket" permission form was acceptable, but now that each permission slip is for a specific date and time, it creates difficulty with getting the infants outdoors on a regular basis.

- Debby Rowan stated that in the past the school age camp packet included a calendar of field trip dates and times, and that one permission slip was used for the summer's activities. She is now told that parents must sign a separate form for each trip. This is causing a lot of extra work for staff and is causing parent complaints, as well.
- Lisa Clifford and Melanie Brizzi said they would research this issue and report back as soon as possible since summer program forms are being handled now.
- Heidi Dowell expressed her concern that the definition of supervision in the state regulations sets an impossible standard. The wording that caregivers must have "all children in sight" sets the expectation that staff should see everything that happens in a classroom. This is not possible while giving appropriate attention to children (reading a story, tying a shoe, changing a diaper).
- Mike Garatoni stated that his center was cited because an accident occurred, rather than based on the caregivers' actions at the time of the incident, with the implication that an accident would not have happened if children were being supervised properly. This leaves centers open to law suits claiming inadequate supervision, even when caregivers are attentive and following center procedures.
- Lisa Clifford said that the state's consultants do recognize that accidents will happen even with appropriate supervision. Melanie Brizzi agreed to review the regulation and related interpretive guidelines regarding supervision.

Concerns and Questions

- Pam Buschkill received an e-mail from a provider in her area with a concern. The center was contacted by the state and told that an employee could not work in the center due to an investigation by Child Protective Services. However, neither the center nor the named employee was able to get further information or justification for this action. The employee was unable to work and the center was unable to provide an explanation.
- Lisa Clifford will check on this particular situation directly with the center involved. The general procedure is that an employee cannot continue in child care if there is a *substantiated* case. Also CPS has made some internal adjustments so that investigations involving child care employees can be handled as quickly as possible.
- Tom Rayl discussed a concern regarding the liability involved with requiring centers to serve children with special health or medical treatments, such as monitoring, determining and then administering the correct dosage of insulin. In addition to staff training and staff time involved in special treatments, some medical requirements may be beyond the expertise and/or comfort level of employees who must handle this, and yet centers cannot refuse care.

Meeting Adjourned

- The next meeting on June 11, 2009, may be moved to a later time due to the joint meeting to be scheduled with the other Advisory Board groups from homes and ministries. Lisa Clifford will arrange and notify the group.
- Terry Kosik motioned to adjourn the meeting. Heidi Dowell seconded. Meeting adjourned at 3:05 pm.